

COMMUNICATIONS  
FROM THE  
STATES AND TERRITORIES.

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interesting communications will be gladly received.]

From South Carolina.  
Cadet Smith Speaks for Himself.

COLUMBIA, S. C., July 22, 1874.

Sir: Now that the Academic Board of West Point has, after a struggle of four years, and by some mysterious method, come to the conclusion that I am "very studious but with little aptitude," and has found out that I am "deficient" in Philosophy, on which account I was dismissed from the Academy and discharged the service of the United States, I think that it is but just to myself and a duty I owe to my race, to make a public statement of what has transpired during my four years' stay at the United States Military Academy.

To that end I respectfully request the use of the columns of your paper.

I have been silent during all these years of trouble and oppression, not because I was afraid or ashamed to speak of the state of affairs that existed at West Point but because the army regulations expressly forbid any cadet to publish anything or have anything published with respect to the Military Academy.

But, Mr. Editor, allow me to anticipate a little, by speaking of the present difficulty, which has resulted in my dismissal and then I shall begin at the date of my entrance, June 1st, 1870, and speak of things in their regular order.

I was called for examination in Philosophy on the 5th or 6th of June, at about 4.30 P. M. Several members of the section of which I was a member, were sent to the blackboard to explain subjects in different parts of the course. I was called up, questioned on the subject of astronomy, and then sent to the blackboard, the Instructor, 2d Lieut. D. A. Lyle, of the Second Artillery, handing me a slip of paper with an equation on it, said: "Mr. Smith, explain the compound microscope, and discuss the equation with reference to that microscope."

I took the paper, copied the equation on the board, and dropped the paper on the floor, as I had no further use for it. I then drew a figure to represent the compound microscope and wrote on the blackboard the mathematical work relating to the discussion of the equation given by Lieutenant Lyle. During this time the cadets who had been sent to the board before me were reciting, and when they had all finished, Professor Michie, who is the head of the department of Philosophy, called upon me to recite. But the Superintendent said: "It is now five o'clock, the hour for adjournment has arrived, and we won't have time to hear Mr. Smith. I was then ordered to take my seat, which I did. But the Superintendent now said: "I see that the clock is a few minutes fast, and you will have time to question another cadet." So Professor Michie called up another cadet, questioned him, and left me at my seat. After questioning this cadet, the section was ordered to retire, and two members of it, Cadet Fuller, who had not been sent to the board, and I, were ordered to return next morning at nine o'clock.

At the designated hour I was in the examination-room, and when called up, Lieutenant Lyle said: "Mr. Smith, deduce the expression for the dispersive power of any medium." I went to the board, and just as I got there, Mr. Michie said: "Mr. Smith, what is that work that you put on the board yesterday?" I pointed to the figure I had drawn the day before, and said: "That figure represents the compound microscope," then pointing to the mathematical work, "That is the discussion of equation 54 which was given me on a slip of paper." Professor Michie then said: "You are altogether mistaken as to your subject; you had an entirely different subject given you." I said: "Professor, Lieutenant Lyle gave me equation 54 on a slip of paper and told me to represent the compound microscope and discuss that equation with reference to that microscope." Professor Michie said: "Mr. Smith, I told you that you had another subject altogether; you had to represent the compound microscope and deduce the expression for its magnifying power."

I knew that no such subject had been given me, because equation 54 had nothing whatever to do with the magnifying power of that microscope—equation 68 being employed for that purpose—but what could I, a friendless and powerless cadet, do to convince a Professor that he was wrong and I was right? Nothing, except to run the risk of being put in arrest and court-martialed for disrespect to my superior, making false statements etc., *ad infinitum*, so I did what I have had to do too long—i. e., say nothing.

I then turned to the board and assumed the equation which expresses the relation between the incident and deviated rays in the case of a convex lens, and from this deduced an expression for the dispersive power of a lens.

I then turned around and waited to be called on to recite. I was soon ordered to begin and I did so, but I had gone only a little way, when Professor Michie interrupted me and said that I had used the lens, but he wished me to use the optical prism in this demonstration. Now, Art. 3, Bartlett's Optics (the text we use), reads as follows: "Whatever affords a passage to light is called a medium. Glass, water, air, Torricellian vacuum, etc., are media," therefore in using the lens, I obeyed the order to "deduce the expression for the dispersive power of any medium," for, according to the text, glass is a medium, and the lens deviates light as well as the optical prism. I had, of course, no power to discuss the matter then and there with Professor Michie, so I rubbed out my work and deduced the expression, using the optical prism, but in so doing I had to assume certain equations deduced in a previous demonstration, and of which I assumed three that I remembered.

I was again called upon to recite and proceeded without interruption until I had gone some distance with my demonstration, when

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Professor Michie said: "Mr. Smith, I want to ask you a question. Suppose you had several prisms deviating light, how would you find the ultimate deviation?" I said: "I would take the algebraic sum of all the deviations." Professor M. said: "Suppose some of the deviating angles were turned in one direction and the others in another direction, how would you find it in that case?" I said: "I would regard those deviations produced by prisms whose deviating angles were turned in one direction, as positive, and those produced by prisms whose deviating angles were turned in the opposite direction as negative." Professor M. said: "Then you would not take the sum?" I said: "No, sir, I would take the algebraic sum, as I said."

Professor M. said: "I did not hear you say the algebraic sum. I understood you to say the sum." I said nothing more, and waited a moment, thinking he had some other question to ask; but instead, he seemed to be very much exasperated, and speaking very harshly, said: "Well, what are you waiting for? Why don't you go on?" I went on with my demonstration a minute or two, but was interrupted again and again with questions, some of which had no bearing whatever on the subject, and asked, as I believe, only to confuse me if possible.

After I had finished my demonstration, Professor M. asked me where I got the three equations that were at the top of the board. I told him that I assumed them, that they had been deduced in a previous demonstration and I remembered them. (I had a right to assume any equation, and make use of any principle previously deduced, and which related to my subject.) He then asked me if I had used those equations. I found, upon looking over my work that I had used the first and third, but not the second, and so I told him. He then wanted to know why I had not assumed the second, and I answered that I remembered the three equations as being given together, and that I thought I would have to use all of them, and that I did not notice that the second was not required.

Professor M. now said: "Well, you see it is wrong?" "No, sir," I said, "that equation is right, but it is unnecessary." Professor M. then said: "I do not question the correctness of the equation, but did you use it?" "No, sir," I said. "Well, sir," said Professor M., "it should not be there, and, therefore, it is all wrong. That will do, sir."

This was my examination in Philosophy conducted, and upon that "examination" I was declared "deficient."

Now, I appeal to the judgment of every intelligent man: can that be called a fair and impartial examination? Is it not perfectly evident that there was an under-current of narrow-minded prejudice continually forcing its way to the surface, and warping the mind, not only of Professor M., but of many another who sat in judgment on that day, and upon whose decision rested the verdict? Does it not show that he was examining (if such a farce can be called an examination), not Cadet Smith, but "the colored cadet," "the nigger cadet," "nigger Jim," "the Moke," or some other of the opprobrious designations by which I was known, for they were so numerous that I have not time to enumerate them, nor do I know which was the favorite with the gentlemen in question.

On the 30th of June the result of that so-called examination was published at parade, and that was the first knowledge I had of the finding of the Board. On the next day I was sent for by the adjutant and notified that the order for my discharge had arrived, and that I should turn in the public property in my possession, have my papers signed, and settle up with the Treasurer, and before four o'clock that afternoon I had ceased to be a cadet at the Military Academy.

Of course there was great rejoicing in the corps of cadets, and without a doubt among "the powers that be," though while in the former it was perfectly public and quite demonstrative, in the latter it was not visible. I left the "Point" determined to carry my case to a higher power, and ask, not for favor, but for fair play; for I went to West Point in 1870 with the determination to overcome all obstacles and graduate, and thus prove to the country that the negro could and would "fight it out on this line if it took all!"—his life.

I went to Washington, and in company with Senator Patterson and my old true and tried friend and schoolmate, Samuel Lee, called upon the Secretary of War, on the morning of the 17th of July. I stated to the Secretary that I was dissatisfied with the result of the examination, as I did not consider it a fair one, and that an injustice had been done me, and I asked him to have me re-examined, as I was confident that I could pass an examination on any part of the course. The Secretary said: "I will not do it," and gave as a reason that he believed that I had had a fair examination, and also that he wanted another cadet at West Point from my district and that he had already notified Hon. R. B. Elliott to send some one there. The Secretary then used the following plain and decisive language, viz.: "Gentlemen, I don't wish to be misquoted as saying that I can't give Mr. Smith a re-examination, for I say I won't do it."

I then made another proposition, viz., I asked him to let me go back and join the class below me, thus losing one year by going over this course again, for although I had already lost a year on account of my troubles there the first year, I was willing to lose another rather than lose the victory for which I had fought so long with all my power. But now the Secretary says: "I can't do that without the recommendation of the Academic Board at West Point, and they won't recommend it. I was speaking with Colonel Reger, the Superintendent of the Academy in New York, last Sunday, about you, and he told me that the Academic Board would not recommend you to be reinstated." I spoke to him of two cadets who had been turned back to a lower class at the same time that I was dismissed, but of course he says they were recommended by the Academic Board.

I am, of course, too old for reappointment, so I am thus debarred the privilege of getting back.

Now, Mr. Editor, this is the way that the matter stands at present: we have an educa-

tional institution in "free America," supported by the taxes of the black man as well as those of the white, and yet those who rule it have not learned the meaning of the words: "All men are born free and equal," and that beautiful place on the banks of the Hudson is perfectly oblivious to the existence of such a thing as the XVIII Amendment. Why should all this narrow-minded prejudice be allowed to exist in an institution supported by the government of the United States when everything is being done to break it down in South Carolina colleges? And yet West Point boasts to-day that no negro has ever graduated from her walls, and while the present state of affairs exists, it will continue to be so.

And what is there in the course that is so difficult for colored cadets to master, while a majority of the white cadets find no trouble at all? It is simply this: the old prejudices that were engendered in West Point from its foundation and which have grown and increased with her growth and increase, are just as rampant there to-day as they were forty years ago, and until that hot bed of corruption is stirred up from her very foundations and purified, we who go there in any capacity whatever, may expect what we will most surely receive—every kind of insult that can be heaped upon us.

But, Mr. Editor I fear I am intruding both upon your time and space, so I shall have to finish my communication at some future time.

Yours, respectfully,  
J. W. SMITH,  
Late Cadet U. S. M. A.

From Ohio.  
CINCINNATI, OHIO, July 26 1874.

To the Editor of the New National Era:

PROSPECTIVE.  
Probably none of your compositors will remember the signature attached to this communication, so long have I been silent. Since those long years of *ante bellum* days when you were located on the banks of the Genesee, and by the publication of the *North Star* and *Frederick Douglass' Paper* within its limits, raised Rochester from the position of a mere way station on the Central road, to the dignity of a city, and I aspired to write for the columns which Ethiope, Communipaw and Cosmopolite adorned, there has arisen a more cultured generation, quick-witted and ready with the pen, while I am getting my ancient ink-horn in order and retaining the nib of my old goose-quill, get themselves quickly into print, and I find the ideas which I would fain have uttered, better placed before the public than I could ever have placed them.

I do not grumble at this. One generation cannot occupy the stage of life forever, and boys born in this era of locomotives and telegraphs must be fast; nor would I have grasped my old-time pen now, had it not been for an accident which has befallen your regular correspondent, Depugh, concerning whose fate I now must be anxious, and that fate I now reveal.

SOCIAL.  
General Custer, in starting for the Black Hills, said: "This is going to be a bad season for strangers," and so it has proved in the case of Depugh, who has passed safely through many a dire campaign, the Chillicothe movement not even singeing him, to be gobbed up at last.

But who can resist Cupid? Love and death lay hold on all. Cupid has been on a raid through this vicinity, and "that's what's the matter" with Depugh.

The summer vacation had come on and those who could had gone to the various watering places, and those who could not had closed the front shutters and retired to the steeple in the rear of their houses there to endure the dog days the best way they could, when suddenly the comet, the hydrophobia, Tom Collins, the row in Elder Magee's church, and a series of brilliant weddings set all agog.

For the last of these disturbing causes the "school marm" of this vicinity are chiefly to blame.

We have had here for several years a Normal School for the ostensible purpose of training teachers, but we all know now that its real purpose was to teach the girls how to catch husbands. The demure young rogues managed to extract, as bees do honey from flowers, from spelling books, primers, and other implements of the profession, the bird-line in which they ensnare the feet of unwary youngsters like Depugh. Only think of it! One-third of the "school marm" of this large city married within a year! Here is a nice little problem for the sisterhood to solve mentally: If 33 1/3 per cent. of the "school marm" of a given city are married in one year, how long will it take them all to catch husbands?

Now, don't all raise your hands at once, but speak, one at a time.

But, I must begin at the beginning. The first wedding was that of Miss Mary L. Foote to Mr. George Haynes, and of which I am informed a correspondent has written to you. Before the gossips had settled fully all the vital points connected with the first wedding, as to the age of the bride and the value of the lace which adorned her dress, etc., there came the rush to the second. The bride this time was Miss Kate Ida Thomas, the daughter of Mr. Alexander Thomas whose fame as an artist is as wide as the nation, and Mr. Lewis Depugh Easton. The wedding service was performed at Zion Baptist Church, which was brightly illuminated for the occasion. About 7 P. M. carriages could have been seen rolling up to the door of the church, and finely dressed gentlemen alighting therefrom and passing into the church to perform their duties as ushers. The ceremony at the church was conducted under the auspices of the "Eureka," a club composed of young men, for moral, social, and intellectual improvement, of which Mr. Haynes is the secretary. The ushers, Messrs. J. E. Tolliver, C. B. Crockett, T. H. Gibson, D. W. Winston, and T. J. Monroe, members of the "Eureka," were attired in full evening dress; on their left breast was worn a hand-sewn wedding badge, composed of white satin, four and a half inches long, by two inches wide, trimmed with gold fringe, and in the centre of the badge was a very neatly embroidered letter E, of the old English

text, in gold bullion, surmounted by a neat button-hole bouquet of tube roses and rose buds, (white.) The ushers were kept busy seating the friends, and for fully an hour before the arrival of the wedding party the edifice was crowded to its utmost capacity with as fine and intelligent an audience as it has ever been its pleasure to behold. It might well have been said that it was a gathering of the brave and the fair. About a quarter of eight o'clock the organist, Prof. Tosse, struck up a beautiful wedding march from the grand opera "The Marriage of Figaro," by Mozart. At eight o'clock the wedding party arrived. As the peals of the organ were being wafted through the spacious sanctuary, a stir was heard at each of the doors opening into the side aisles of the church, when immediately all faces were quickly turned to the direction from which the noise came. The doors were thrown open, when the members of the family and relatives of the contracting parties divided into two groups, marched down either aisle, and took their position on each side of the altar; shortly after which the door leading to the main entrance was seen to open and the bridal party entered, headed by the President of the Eureka. Next in order the Rev. P. F. Fossett, who performed the ceremony, and then the bride and groom elect who were followed by the two bridesmaids, Miss Ernestine L. Clark and Miss Mattie E. Fossett, Mr. P. H. Clark and Mrs. Annie A. Fossett (the mother of the bride) bringing up the rear, passed down the center aisle amid the sweet and soft strains of the organ, taking their position upon the raised platform, with the exception of Madam Forte, who retired to one of the family groups; after which the ushers, two in each of the side aisles, and the President in the center, march down and took their positions facing the bridal party, after which the ceremony was performed, it being a very impressive one. When the question was asked, "Who giveth this woman to thee?" Mr. P. H. Clark was on the spot to perform that important and pleasant duty. Mr. Clark also performed the duties of groomsman to the father of the bride on the event of his marriage quite a time ago. After the ceremony was performed the procession, headed by the ushers, passed up the aisle and out of the church to their carriages, the ushers forming a hollow square from the door to keep the crowd from passing them.

The supper, prepared by Rice, the fashionable caterer, of West Fourth street, was a marvel of beauty and abundance. Such piles of confections, such pyramids of ices and jellies, and withal such elegance of arrangement is seldom seen. We talked and ate and admired until the approach of the "wee sma' hours agout the twal," when a band of muskies glided into the room and began to tune their fiddles, little and big, gave a hint which I and the other deacons took, and left the younger set to finish the night with a merry dance.

The night following the wedding I have just described, a reception was given by Elder P. F. Fossett to Mr. and Mrs. Haynes, at which both brides were present, and there was a repetition of the rich dresses, bright eyes, and merry tongues of the evenings before.

The supper table elicited but one opinion; it was richly set off by a solid silver service, while every possible variation of gustatory or aesthetic taste was catered to in the manner and matter of getting up. The things upon the table looked too good to eat, and then when you had tasted them they tasted too good to be let alone.

I retired early from the parlors, leaving them to the young and hopeful ones who had assembled. Taking my seat in the garden with the elders of the company, we found ample pleasure in listening to the merry voices of our children, while we compared our rheumatisms, discussed the failure of the civil rights bill and mourned over the fall of the great Brooklyn preacher.

"O! Lucifer, son of the morning, how hast thou fallen!"

POLITICAL.  
The outlook from the Republican standpoint is rather dismal. The temperance movement has played duck and drake with that party. It has not in any State or municipal platform espoused the cause of prohibition, but the Germans who are to a man for free beer, seem determined to hold the party responsible for sentiments it has nowhere avowed and so will not vote with us. Then the ultra temperance men will not vote with us because they believe us to be bound to the Rights Bill will render the colored men indifferent about going to the polls, hence we expect a light Republican vote this fall.

The address of the Congressional Committee is a splendid document, but too long for general reading. In the course of the campaign, I suppose the stumpers will bring it down to the people and have them understand it thoroughly.

MIAMI.

A Brilliant Affair.  
To the Editor of the New National Era:

The past week has been unusually productive of society gossip. The principal theme being the approaching nuptials of Mr. George W. Hays, a young gentleman of untarnished reputation, and Miss Mary L. Foote, a young lady of exemplary qualities, and an ornament to our society, both of this city. The expectations of the many friends of the couple have been so great that they could hardly contain them, but their longings were happily satisfied on last Thursday evening, July 16, 1874, it being the occasion of the marriage of the pair. The marriage ceremony was performed at Zion Baptist Church, which was brightly illuminated for the occasion. About 7 P. M. carriages could have been seen rolling up to the door of the church, and finely dressed gentlemen alighting therefrom and passing into the church to perform their duties as ushers. The ceremony at the church was conducted under the auspices of the "Eureka," a club composed of young men, for moral, social, and intellectual improvement, of which Mr. Hays is the secretary. The ushers, Messrs. J. E. Tolliver, C. B. Crockett, T. H. Gibson, D. W. Winston, and T. J. Monroe, members of the "Eureka," were attired in full evening dress; on their left breast was worn a hand-sewn wedding badge, composed of white satin, four and a half inches long, by two inches wide, trimmed with gold fringe, and in the centre of the badge was a very neatly embroidered letter E, of the old English

text, in gold bullion, surmounted by a neat button-hole bouquet of tube roses and rose buds, (white.) The ushers were kept busy seating the friends, and for fully an hour before the arrival of the wedding party the edifice was crowded to its utmost capacity with as fine and intelligent an audience as it has ever been its pleasure to behold. It might well have been said that it was a gathering of the brave and the fair. About a quarter of eight o'clock the organist, Prof. Tosse, struck up a beautiful wedding march from the grand opera "The Marriage of Figaro," by Mozart. At eight o'clock the wedding party arrived. As the peals of the organ were being wafted through the spacious sanctuary, a stir was heard at each of the doors opening into the side aisles of the church, when immediately all faces were quickly turned to the direction from which the noise came. The doors were thrown open, when the members of the family and relatives of the contracting parties divided into two groups, marched down either aisle, and took their position on each side of the altar; shortly after which the door leading to the main entrance was seen to open and the bridal party entered, headed by the President of the Eureka. Next in order the Rev. P. F. Fossett, who performed the ceremony, and then the bride and groom elect who were followed by the two bridesmaids, Miss Ernestine L. Clark and Miss Mattie E. Fossett, Mr. P. H. Clark and Mrs. Annie A. Fossett (the mother of the bride) bringing up the rear, passed down the center aisle amid the sweet and soft strains of the organ, taking their position upon the raised platform, with the exception of Madam Forte, who retired to one of the family groups; after which the ushers, two in each of the side aisles, and the President in the center, march down and took their positions facing the bridal party, after which the ceremony was performed, it being a very impressive one. When the question was asked, "Who giveth this woman to thee?" Mr. P. H. Clark was on the spot to perform that important and pleasant duty. Mr. Clark also performed the duties of groomsman to the father of the bride on the event of his marriage quite a time ago. After the ceremony was performed the procession, headed by the ushers, passed up the aisle and out of the church to their carriages, the ushers forming a hollow square from the door to keep the crowd from passing them.

The groom wore a handsome suit of black, with the exception of the vest, which was of immaculate white; white gloves and tie; and on his left breast the wedding badge of the Eureka, surmounted by a neat tube rose button-hole bouquet. The bride was attired in a handsome organdie, of the finest quality, with trimmings of the same, low cut, with Marie Antoinette sleeves; beautiful pearl earrings and brooch, a present from the groom; a bridal wreath of orange blossoms, a perfect imitation of nature, adorned her pretty head; the veil of illusion hung over her face, which, after the ceremony, was thrown back from the face, floating over the back of the dress, reaching almost to the bottom of the train, which was about three feet long; her toilette was excellent. The bridesmaids were dressed in light silks, covered with an illusion in ruffles laid in pleats, and a handsome sash held in place by a beautiful spray of orange blossoms.

The scene at the house where the reception was held beggared description, it being brightly illuminated, and filled with the *élite* of our city. Pretty women, gallant men, silks, satins, precious jewels, and flowers were in profusion.

Not being a close student of the Jenkins school, I can hardly be expected to give an adequate description of the charming fashions displayed in dazzling profusion.

Among the more prominent, I might mention Miss Mary E. Baker, of Louisville, a beautiful brunette, who was attired in a handsome pearl-colored silk brocade, with pearl ornaments. Miss Pickett, of Louisville, a charming young lady, whom Madam Rumor says is soon to become a bride. She was dressed in a beautiful blue silk, handsomely trimmed. Mrs. Fanny Macanley, of Louisville, a very pleasant lady, wore a very handsome black gown grain. The bridal trousseau, I learn, is very fine. The presents were displayed on a table in the bridal chamber. The collection was very extensive; among them were articles of great intrinsic value. On the mantle was displayed a beautiful bouquet of the bride's, composed of tube roses, jessamines, begonias, rose buds, (white,) lily-of-the-valley, with rep silk, and silver bullion, finish silk cord and tassels, to which was attached a cord bearing the following inscription: "To Mamie, with the best wishes of the Eureka for the future."

After the happy pair had received the congratulations and well wishes of their friends, and after all had partaken of the splendid repast furnished by one of the first-class caterers of our city, the gay and much delighted guests repaired to their homes.

After all of that happy household retired, they were aroused by a serenade to the bride and groom by Prof. C. T. Graham's serenading band.

This notable event will long be remembered as one of the most important in the annals of the first-class society of Cincinnati.

There is to be a grand reception given to the pair on next Thursday evening, July 23d, 1874, by Miss Mattie E. Fossett. Mr. Hays and his charming lady will remain in the city until the 1st of August to attend the receptions to be given for them and to receive the calls of their friends, after which they will start on their wedding tour. May their pathways be amid beds of flowers. May they be ever strangers to sorrow, in the earnest and best wishes of your correspondent.

T. J. M.

[Communicated.]

## Moral Reflections No. 20.

"I will run in the way of my commandments, when thou hast enlarged my commandments." Ps. 119: 32 v.

There is much in the present day of outward zeal in the cause of Christ, while it is to be feared there is comparatively little closet devotion.

Activity in the service of God can only be originated and maintained by an enlarge-

ment of heart, pure devotional feeling excited by prayer and meditation. But we like the world to see what we are doing, and we flatter ourselves that we are thus by our works serving God most acceptably. Yet, without the heart keeps abreast of our moral activities, they will soon languish and drag or utterly fail of accomplishing the good we design. Diligence in business must be accompanied with fervency of spirit to make our labor profitable to ourselves or others, or meet the Divine approbation.

To keep the heart right, there must be constant and earnest communion with God. There must be the diligent reading of the word, and prayerful meditation thereon.

Thus only can the soul be kept alive and its energies faithfully and vigorously enlisted in the cause of the Redeemer.

What is faith but a resting of the soul on the promises of God. What is fear but the heart standing in awe of the majesty and threatenings of the Almighty. What is love but the feelings of the heart going out towards the loving object of contemplation. What is hope but the joyous expectation of some promised good, that all the Christian graces are brought into exercise in the contemplation of the truth. "While the heart mused the fire burned."

The word of God is thus the moral food of the soul, and faith and love arising therefrom become the motive power of all true and devoted activity in his service. If we would serve the Redeemer efficiently in the outward activities of life, we must keep the fire of devotion burning brightly on the altar of our hearts by daily communion with God, and meditation on His truths. In this the Saviour has set us an example in frequently retiring from the pressure of active duties to solitude, silence, and prayer. A. A. WASHINGTON CITY, July 24, 1874.

## From Virginia.

Ten Years Ago—Changes.—The Auction Block and Whipping Post—Joe Mayo—Political Outlook—Col. Burgess—Governor Walker—Persons—Gossip, etc.

To the Editor of the New National Era:

Ten years ago Richmond was the capital of the late Confederacy, to-day it is simply the capital of Virginia. Great has been the changes in these ten years.

I was in the custom-house building this morning. This building was used by the Jeff Davis government as the treasury department, where the financial affairs of the late C. S. A. were transacted; when I used to have business there during the war, the only colored men to be seen in the building were servants; now it is quite different. I looked in there this morning and beheld a sight that is both wonderful and marvelous—colored men sitting at desks in the capacity of clerks, doing executive duty; others as inspectors of tobacco, under the bureau of Internal Revenue, messengers, deputy collectors, inspectors of customs, etc.

I find colored men holding responsible positions and doing executive duty under the government here, which is more than I could see in Washington.

Col. Burgess, the collector of revenue, whose office is visited daily in a business point of view, by the leading representative bloods and chivalry of Virginia, has several colored men in positions of trust and profit. I have wondered why it is that there is not a single colored man holding an executive position in any one of the departments at Washington, where there is so much talent and ability among our colored people.

When I was here ten, yes, twelve, years ago, Mr. Joseph Mayo was the mayor, the whipping post and auction block were then in full blast and both did a thriving business; then a colored man, free or slave, was not allowed to walk in the streets or near a walking, save in public; not over four persons of color were allowed to assemble together at any one time without the presence of a "Caucasian." No "candle light" was allowed in a colored man's house after seven o'clock, p. m. No meetings could be held without a white man was present; and then colored people were not allowed to go to their churches at night and worship the true and living God, and in the day time they were compelled to have a white minister if they at all, and no colored man was permitted by law to go into the pulpit.

Such was Richmond in times past, and so great has been the change that it is hard to realize it in full. Mr. Mayo is dead and I am reminded of what the Richmond bard once wrote of him:

"Alas poor Joe, the poor man's foe,  
Before life's breath did leave him,  
His burdened soul had no control,  
Death would not receive him.  
The devil said he was afraid  
To take so mean a boarder,  
His great good will and tyrant pride  
Would place hell out of order."

The whipping post is gone, the auction block is "dust to dust and ashes to ashes," "Nigger trader's" alley is no longer the alley it was. Colored men carry sticks and smoke cigars on the highways and byways. The "candle-light law" is dead; churches are open night and day, and an abundance of colored preachers there are who preach Jesus Christ and him crucified from their pulpits.

The only gentle reminder of slavery that looks you in the face, is the proscription and outrage that a colored man is almost sure to encounter if he goes into one of the courts with a white man as a competitor. Judges in this State are appointed, not upon merit, but by and through the influence of their friends, and preference is given to him who has the best war record—the most scars and deepest wounds, and, as a general rule, these military judges carry out on the bench what they tried to do when in the saddle. There is plenty of work but very little justice in Richmond for a colored man if he goes into a court of law.

But all the disadvantages which our people labor under here, do not prevent their rising and progressing. They have suddenly risen from nothing, so to speak, to the positions of merchants, brokers, tobaccoists, dealers, clerks, lawyers, horse dealers, hack owners, livery stable keepers, hotel keepers, butchers, bakers, statesmen, etc., thanks to the genius of our grand national Republican party! Yes, all the hardships that the black

man has had to encounter here in Richmond, he has steadily arisen, notwithstanding, and he can exclaim in truth:

"We are rising, we are rising,  
Amid the changes of our land,  
In the cause of truth and justice,  
Let us all united stand.  
We arose amid our conflict,  
When battle storms were high,  
With returning peace we're rising,  
Like the eagle in the sky."

The thrift, enterprise and ingenuity of the colored citizens of Richmond is truly commendable, and I am glad to be able to state that I have never seen a more thorough-going people than here.

## THE POLITICAL OUTLOOK.

Next November an election takes place in this State. Members of Congress and county officers are to be chosen. My impression is that the Republicans will at least be able to hold their ground and return to the 41st Congress five Republicans.

In this district there is to be a warm fight for representation in the next Congress. The Republicans will unanimously nominate Rush Burgess, and the Democrats will put forward ex-Governor Gilbert C. Walker. I have had a talk with the leading colored and white men in the Republican party here, and they are of the general opinion that Colonel Burgess is the only man equal to the emergency.

The Colonel has not sought the nomination, and if he accepts, it will be a great sacrifice to him personally, but Rush Burgess will do anything that is honorable and right to serve his party. He is a good speaker, and is universally popular with all colored society—a man of great force of character, earnest energetic, diligent and fearless; his record for consistency is splendid, not having moved backward a single step since the reconstruction fight began. He is a man of practical ability, sound common sense, sleepless devotion to public interests, remarkable efficiency in the achievement of practical ends, and has a sturdy contempt for all shams and showy glitter with which smaller men disguise their uselessness.

A leading colored man said to me a short time since that no better man than Col. Burgess could be selected; that there was no man in Virginia whom the colored people, as a class, have a right to place more confidence in; not only has he made them promises, but he has fulfilled them to the letter, and no safer man for the best interests of Virginia could be chosen.

The Republican party here is well organized. There is complete harmony, union, and I feel safe in saying that their majority will be increased. FREDMONT.

## NORTHERMBERLAND COUNTY, VA.